

BULGARIA ACCUSED OF PLOT ON POPE

Italian Prosecutor Says Soviet May Have Given Support

ROME, June 19 (AP) — An Italian prosecutor said today that Bulgaria, possibly with Soviet support, masterminded the 1981 plot to assassinate Pope John Paul II, apparently in an attempt to eliminate the Pope's support for the independent Polish labor union Solidarity.

"That's the conclusion of my investigation," the prosecutor, Antonio Albano, said in an interview.

Mr. Albano confirmed that his report on the Pope's shooting says that "there was a specific interest in killing the Pontiff — the social convulsions in Poland" caused by the rise of the now-outlawed Solidarity union.

Suggesting that the Soviet Union might have been behind the plot to kill the Pope, Mr. Albano said: "Do you think Bulgaria could do this sort of thing without Moscow's agreement? Do you think Bulgaria's decision to boycott the Olympic Games was made by Bulgaria alone? I don't think so. But of course this is my personal opinion."

Soviet Union Not Named

He confirmed that his report does not specifically mention any Soviet connection with the shooting of the Pope on May 13, 1981, in St. Peter's Square.

The prosecutor's report was first made public in an article in The New York Times by Claire Sterling. The report does not mention the Soviet Union by name, but, speaking of the turmoil in Poland, says that "some political figure of great power took note of this most grave situation and, mindful of the vital needs of the Eastern bloc, decided it was necessary to kill Pope Wojtyla."

The Italian Government has ordered an investigation into how the report was made public.

Mr. Albano said he submitted the 78-page report on his inquiry to Judge Ilario Martella, who is in charge of the state investigation into the shooting of the Pope by Mehmet Ali Agca, a Turkish national now serving life in prison.

Asks Trials for Seven

The report recommends that three Bulgarians and four other Turks be tried in connection with the attack on the Pope, Mr. Albano said, adding that he expected Judge Martella to decide on his recommendations next month.

The three Bulgarians Mr. Albano said should be brought trial are Sergei Ivanov Antonov, former station manager of the Bulgarian airlines in Rome, and two former Bulgarian Embassy employees, Todor Aivazov and Zhelyo Kolev Vassilev.

All three face charges of complicity in the attack on the Pope. Among them, only Mr. Antonov is in custody. The others returned to Bulgaria.

On Monday, Judge Martella granted a defense request that Mr. Antonov be removed from jail for medical reasons and placed under house arrest. Mr. Antonov had been allowed to be placed under house arrest last December after 13 months in prison, but he was returned to jail in March.

The Turks Mr. Albano said should be tried are Bekir Celenk, in custody in Bulgaria; Omer Bagci, in jail in Italy; Oral Celik, whose whereabouts are unknown, and Musa Serdar Celebi, in jail in Italy. All four Turks have been charged with complicity in the attack on the Pope.

Bulgaria Denies Involvement

Bulgaria has denied any involvement in the shooting of the Pope and has charged that the allegations were part of a Western plot to discredit the Communist nation.

The prosecutor also dismissed as "a strange argument" a contention by critics that Mr. Agca had been pressured to implicate Bulgarians in the attack on the Pope. Mr. Albano said much of the information on which his report was based came from Mr. Agca. But he said Mr. Agca's information provided only "starting points" for the state inquiry.

The prosecutor said that his report was covered by judicial secrecy and that copies have been given only to the investigating magistrate and defense lawyers.